

ATO SERVICE AREA RESTRUCTURING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS From Service Center Manager Briefings, June 2006

Why is this restructuring necessary?

Given the new directions in the aviation industry and the pressures on the Federal budget, ATO does not have the fiscal resources to sustain staffs providing duplicative administrative and support functions for nine service area offices in each of the nine regional offices. Organizations in the private sector have been forced to become more efficient out of survival, and now ATO must do the same. For the past several years, due to budget-driven attrition, we have not been able to fill behind the support employees who have retired, resigned, or acquired other jobs. As a result, in some service areas, we have lost over half of our support staff. We must consolidate our resources in order to sustain our human resources and infrastructure and support our customers with efficient, cost-effective staff services. It is the next phase in our transformation to a performance-based organization as mandated by the Congress and directed by the President. .

Why can't people just stay where they are?

Effective December 31, 2006, all impacted positions are being transferred to the Service Centers. The circumstances are analogous to a facility that closes: that is, the positions will no longer be available in their present location.

The leveraging of groupings of expertise in a simplified, shared services structure will enable ATO to reduce duplication of effort while increasing efficiency, productivity, and consistency in the support provided to field facilities. This cannot be achieved by employees "staying where they are." Reorganizations in both the Federal and private sector have shown that leaving people where they are; e.g., attrition in place, is not a viable alternative to consolidation to achieve restructuring goals. Without consolidation, it is extremely difficult to restructure key work processes and centralize overlapping functions to operate more cost effectively. Realizing the anticipated savings can take years to achieve. Given the state of our finances, our infrastructure, and the resources we have already lost, we cannot afford to wait. Moreover, reorganizations that rely on attrition in place often result in workforce imbalances that must be corrected by subsequent restructuring.

What is the rationale for relocating the Operations Liaisons?

The relocation of the Operations Liaisons and Airport Integration Engineers to the Service Centers is necessary to implement standardized support processes across the ATO in a more efficient manner by creating a critical mass of subject matter expertise to improve responsiveness and value of staff support services. In the past, operations liaisons were decentralized for a variety of reasons. In the review of Engineering Services, these functions were considered integral to successfully manage programs. As

such, the responsibility for providing these functions is being assumed, along with other program management functions, by the Service Center. While visits to some sites may be needed from time to time, the majority of work will be provided from the Service Center. The reengineering process will be an important part of redefining how we work together to get the job done with the greatest efficiency.

What is happening to the NAS Technical Evaluation Program (NASTEP)?

A reengineering team is reviewing the placement of this function and a decision will be forthcoming when the review is complete. Whatever the decision is for NASTEP, the function is planned to continue as a field technical assignment. There are no plans to relocate employees who perform these functions to the Service Centers.

What are you doing to accommodate people who want to stay in their present locations?

The ATO, in partnership with Human Resource Management, is making every effort to assist employees impacted by the relocation who, for various reasons, choose not to accept the position offered in the new service centers. The ATO is announcing job vacancies to provide opportunities to compete for ATO positions in the local area.

Human Resources Management is providing training in the use of the FAA's automated staffing system. They are also asking the other FAA lines of business and DOT modes to open their vacancy announcements to ATO employees, and they are contacting the local Federal Executive Board to request assistance in identifying employment opportunities in other federal agencies. Additionally, Human Resources Management has requested that the Department of Labor dispatch rapid response teams to provide information on state services such as training, retraining, and state employment opportunities.

Help desks are available at each Human Resource Management Division located in all of the affected regions. Each help desk is staffed by a human resources professional to provide employees direct means to ask questions and obtain information on how to apply for positions in other offices of the FAA and at other federal agencies.

You can reach the help desk via e-mail at the following addresses:

- 9-ANE-HR-YES@faa.gov
- 9-AEA-HR-YES@faa.gov
- 9-AGL-HR-YES@faa.gov
- 9-ACE-HR-YES@faa.gov
- 9-AWP-HR-YES@faa.gov
- 9-AAL-HR-YES@faa.gov

What is ATO doing to get other LOB's to open the area of consideration to affected ATO employees?

At our request, AHR has written to the other FAA lines of business and to DOT asking them, when opening vacancies, to include current ATO employees as part of the area of consideration. This will allow impacted employees to compete for positions with the rest of FAA and possibly be selected.

If people cannot move, will they be allowed to stay past December if their services are still needed?

Employees can continue providing services from their present locations until December 31, 2006. After that date, all administrative and staff services will be provided by the service centers. Employees who have received a letter of directed reassignment are expected to report to the Service Centers no later than December 31, 2006.

Will there be a need for administrative personnel/support to assist with transition after December 31?

Except for the designated liaison, we do not anticipate that we will need transition support at the six impacted regions beyond 12/31/06.

Will extensions be given if people cannot move by December 31, 2006?

As of December 31, 2006, the positions and their related functions will reside in the service centers and will no longer be available in the six impacted regions. The necessity to complete the restructuring precludes the granting of extensions. The purpose of the reorganization is to gain efficiencies and cost savings so ATO can continue to provide the services our customers need and to take better care of our employees. We cannot begin to realize the anticipated efficiencies and cost savings until the transition to the centers is complete.

Will the Service Center Managers have any flexibility to determine the reporting date?

Employees can collaborate with their service center managers on the date they wish to report to their new locations, up to the December 31, 2006 reporting date. In order to complete the restructuring as planned, all impacted employees are expected to report not later than that date.

How soon after December 31 will separation take place?

The process to address situations where employees decline the reassignment will be initiated in January 2007. Your HRM representative is the best source of information on the steps involved.

What if, on December 31, an employee needs three more months of service to qualify for discontinued service retirement?

Effective December 31, 2006, all impacted positions and their related functions are being transferred to the Service Centers and will no longer be available in the six impacted regions. The necessity to complete the restructuring so we can begin accruing the efficiencies and cost savings precludes the granting of extensions. ATO and AHR will be working to identify other positions for which you may apply. Your HRM representative can advise you on what options are available to you.

What are the next steps for those who decline?

Your first step should be to contact your supervisor or HRM representative to see what other options are available to you. ATO and HRM are offering a number of services to help employees identify other positions for which they can apply. AHR is also available on an ongoing basis to provide retirement and benefits counseling.

Do you need the removal letter to qualify for discontinued service retirement?

You do not need a removal letter; however, you do need a directed administrative reassignment letter containing the following or similar language: "This is official written notification that you are being administratively reassigned from your current geographical location to the **(Service Center and Group name)**. Your pay plan, grade/level and base pay will remain the same. Your specific locality pay may be different depending on your geographical area. This administrative reassignment requires relocation outside of your commuting area and will be effective December 31, 2006, or earlier based on mutual agreement."

Can my family and I travel to the new Service Center to check out the area before I make the decision to move?

Employees cannot be reimbursed for expenses related to relocation, such as house hunting, until they have received a travel authorization. A travel authorization, commonly referred to as a travel order, cannot be issued until a reassignment has been offered and accepted.

Is this an attempt to privatize the FAA, starting with the engineers?

No. This is an initiative to become a more efficient organization, gain control of our operating costs, stem the unplanned loss of our support staff, improve the value of service to our customers, and continue our transition to a performance-based organization. Only a small number of engineers are affected by this restructuring. Engineering Services, which constitutes the majority of the ATO workforce located in the regional offices, will remain in place and continue to report to the appropriate directors for Technical Operations, as they do today.

Is the purpose of this restructuring to force people to quit?

No. ATO values its employees and hopes they will stay. That is why we are offering every impacted employee a reassignment with no loss in base pay, full permanent change of station benefits, and up to one year from the time of the initial announcement in December 2005 to complete the move. We are also advertising positions to provide alternatives to those who for various personal reasons choose not to accept the reassignments. (Please refer to the flyer, *ATO Service Area Restructuring Employees Assistance*, posted on the ATO website: www.ato.faa.gov.)

When will the service centers begin operating?

The Service Centers began operating on June 26, 2006. On that date, ATO employees whose positions are moving to a service center were assigned to one of five groups, based on the functions they current perform: Administrative Services, Business Services, Safety Assurance, System Support, and Planning and Requirements. For now, this is an “in place transition, meaning that until December 31, 2006, most employees will continue to perform the same duties in the same place as they do today. Employees who have not already moved will physically relocate gradually between now and December 31 – the expected completion date of transition. Please refer to the Service Center briefings posted on www.ato.faa.gov for more details.

Why can't we move now?

Employees can begin moving just as soon as they receive and accept the offer of directed reassignment or are selected from one of the many vacancy announcements released to provide employees the opportunity to move early or to relocate to a position in another Service Center. Many employees took advantage of this opportunity. In addition, those who did not bid, but want to move early can send a request to relocate to a particular position-ERR/IPP to their Transition Team administrative lead. If we have bid the position within the past 60 days, we can honor their requests. If not, we will consider issuing another bid to accommodate them.

What is the purpose of reengineering?

The goals of the reengineering process are to streamline business processes to operate more efficiently, reduce touch points, and improve the efficiency of operations under the restructured organization. The ultimate result will be a standard set of business processes that incorporates the best practices and expertise of both the suppliers and receivers of staff support services. The completion of process reengineering will enable the final development of performance metrics, the establishment of service level agreements, identification of job tools and IT requirements, and standardization across all service centers.

When will reengineering be completed?

The process will continue throughout FY 2006, with completion expected in FY 2007.

Why stand up the Service Centers before process reengineering is complete?

Effective reengineering of processes requires clear roles and responsibilities and a simplified management structure. Prior to stand-up, the functions for which consolidation and reengineering are targeted were distributed between 12 directors and 4 service units. This makes it difficult to restructure key work processes and centralize overlapping functions to operate more productively. Restructuring before completion of reengineering is a common transition methodology recommended in large organizations with complex and intertwined processes and business models. It has been found to best build organizational buy-in to the change and provide a good balance between speed and thoroughness while facilitating a balance between cost reduction and effectiveness improvement.

Is it cost beneficial to spend money to move people?

Yes. It is not only cost beneficial but essential. Most of the \$360 to \$460 cost avoidance we are projecting will result from realigning support functions into three shared service centers, reengineering current business processes, and restructuring Engineering Services to operate more productively. The cost of the PCS moves was taken into account in the development of the cost avoidance estimate.

Are all sites being treated the same?

The impact of service area restructuring is different at each location due to unique circumstances; e.g., number of impacted employees, number of local vacancies, number of employees electing to find alternate employment, and percentage of retirement eligible employees. We are working to identify opportunities in all six impacted areas for people who choose not to accept the reassignments. In Kansas City, for example, we are moving certain functions previously performed by the System Management Office (SMO) back to the SMO. This has created opportunities for employees who wish to remain in Kansas City. We anticipate advertising positions in Anchorage to support the modernization of the Alaska Flight Service architecture statewide.

Employees in each of the impacted areas, including Kansas City and Anchorage, were notified that their positions were being relocated to the Service Center. Regardless of their location, employees who find opportunities in the local area will not be doing the same job as before. Those positions and functions have been transferred to the Service Centers.

Why didn't the same positions open in New England that opened in Kansas City?

The movement of positions from the Central Regional Office in Kansas City back to the SMO parallels a similar realignment that took place in the New England SMO in September 2004. That is, 16 positions that had been reassigned earlier to the New England Regional Office were moved back to the SMO. Transferring these positions

back to the SMO reduced the number of employees subsequently affected by this restructuring.

What happens when people who do not have to move perform some of the functions that are being moved?

During the transition (up to December 31, 2006), the functions will continue to be performed as they are now. After December 31, the functions that are moved will be absorbed and performed by employees in the Service Center to which the functions were transferred.

If a number of people decline the positions in the service centers, how do you plan to fill the gap?

ATO has a staffing strategy to make sure the work is accomplished. This includes continuing to advertise positions in the service centers, resource sharing, and contract support. Over 200 employees have bid on positions in the service centers. These include people who want to complete the move early, move to a different job in the service center, relocate to a different service center, or take advantage of opportunities in the Service Centers. Job vacancies have been announced that will open vacancies to those outside ATO. The announcements will also give family members who are FAA employees the opportunity to relocate to a service center. In addition, the service centers will allow us to leverage our resources across the country – which is one of the reasons they were created.

What contractors will be hired, how will they be trained, and how long will they be there?

ATO will hire contractors, as needed, to augment staffing in all fields and maintain a steady level of support during the start-up of the Service Centers.

How will Service Center success be measured?

The Service Center's performance will be measured by the products it produces, based on unit cost and customer satisfaction.

How much PCS money is there?

Sufficient PCS resources are available to fund all relocations to the Service Centers.

If there is money for PCS, why doesn't it follow people who get jobs in other parts of the ATO?

ATO is providing PCS funds to implement the Service Centers. If an employee chooses to pursue a different assignment, the PCS funds will still be needed to relocate the employee who fills the vacancy created by that declination. The decision to provide PCS

is not based on the person who is moving: it is based on the specific needs of the position to be filled.

How does Logistics fit into the plan?

On June 1, 2006, Ruth Leverenz, Assistant Administrator for Regions and Center Operations, announced the establishment of three Logistics Service Areas to better support the ATO service areas. The Logistics Division Managers in the Northwest Mountain, Southern, and Southwest Regions have been designated Logistics Service Area Managers. Logistics Division Managers in the Alaskan and Western-Pacific Regions will report to the Logistics Service Area Manager in the Northwest Mountain Region. The same reporting structure will be in place for Central and Great Lakes, who will report to the Logistics Service Area Manager in the Southwest Region. Eastern and New England Logistics Division Managers will report to the Logistics Service Area Manager in the Southern Region. This is a welcome change that will greatly simplify the coordination of logistics activities between our two organizations and improve the effectiveness of both organizations.

What is the purpose and duration of the Liaison position?

The ATO liaisons began reporting to the Service Center Managers (SCM) on June 26, 2006, and the plan is for them to remain in their current service area satellite offices through June 2007. Their duties include the following:

- Serving as the ATO's representative to the Regional Management teams and local point-of-contact (POC) to the Regional Administrators
- Representing the Service Center Manager (SCM) with Engineering Services, sister FAA organizations, and external customers
- Serving as the SCM's POC for Headquarters and field facilities problem resolution
- Providing the on-site contact for regional issues involving service center personnel, including group managers; e.g., logistics, relocation coordination, SCM communications, and time and attendance approval for group managers
- Ensuring continued communication and coordination within and outside the service center to facilitate the transition of service center functions to the new area offices

How can you prepare space if you don't know who is moving?

The space is being prepared to accommodate the planned staffing configuration for the Service Center, not the number of people moving.

What about letterhead, signature blocks, and routing symbols and signature blocks?

The latest organizational charts are posted on ATO Online. These charts include names and routing symbols. We will be issuing a Transition Bulletin shortly that will include instructions for signature blocks and where to address correspondence.

Will people relocating to the service centers take their work with them?

Yes.

Who is my supervisor? Will I have more than one?

During the “in-place” period between now and December 31, 2006, employees will, for the most part, continue to report to the same first-level supervisor they report to now. As of June 26, 2006, higher-level management shifted to the Service Centers and there is a “transition” supervisor designated for each “satellite” service area office.

Will engineering services also relocate to the Service Centers?

The majority of Engineering Services personnel will remain in their present locations and report to the directors of Technical Operations located in the Service Area Office in Atlanta, Fort Worth, or Seattle.

Can we backfill vacancies in Engineering Services to take care of employees who do not want to move?

Technical Operations is presently streamlining its Engineering Services groups and its staffing and funding authorization for FY 2007 are not yet known. Vacancies will be advertised where there is a known requirement and funding is available.

Will ATO offer buyouts?

No buyouts are associated with this restructuring.

What is the policy on swaps?

Employees represented by a Bargaining Unit may arrange mutual reassignments in accordance with their existing collective bargaining agreements. Mutual reassignments among non-bargaining Unit employees in the ATO may be allowable as long as they are between two ATO employees, same position, in the same pay plan, same title, and same series. These mutual reassignments do not, and should not, create two vacancies; they are simply mutual reassignments between two employees. All mutual reassignments are subject to the approval of the employer.

Can employees bid on jobs in Fort Worth and Seattle as well as Atlanta?

Yes.

Will the field administrative structure remain the same for now? Is there a Phase 3?

Phase 3 will look at overlapping administrative and staff support functions in field facilities and how these functions can be provided more efficiently and cost effectively. This phase will begin after the Service Centers are stabilized, although there may be preliminary analysis prior to that time.

Can we get a copy of the Service Manager's briefing?

Yes. All three briefings are posted on the ATO website: www.ato.faa.gov

Who is the Service Center's customer?

The Service Center's internal customers include the Directors of Operations for the En Route and Oceanic, Terminal, Tactical Operations, and Technical Operations Service units in the Service Area Offices and Headquarters service units. External customers are the other lines of business (e.g., Flight Standards, Airports).

Will other Lines of Business have input into the reengineering process?

Yes. As part of our customer base, their involvement is essential to ensure we are meeting their needs.

How will ATO work with the other lines of business?

Agreements will be established with both internal and external customers that define the working relationships.

Who is looking at all the documents that require updating, space requirements, etc?

Transition Team subgroups have been established for this purpose. Other service units will be also be reviewing their documents.

Where is the Employee Information Center?

The center is a Help Desk staffed by AHR. You can reach the help desk via e-mail at the following addresses:

- 9-ANE-HR-YES@faa.gov
- 9-AEA-HR-YES@faa.gov
- 9-AGL-HR-YES@faa.gov
- 9-ACE-HR-YES@faa.gov
- 9-AWP-HR-YES@faa.gov
- 9-AAL-HR-YES@faa.gov

Are any team building activities planned for those of us who are relocating?

It will be left to the discretion of the Service Center Manager to decide when such activities are needed.

When will the change in locality pay occur?

The new locality pay and state tax withholdings will change with the first full pay period at the new location.

Will I lose my current series if I move?

Employees will be reassigned to positions for which they are qualified. In most cases, this means employees will retain their current job series. However, under reengineering, which is to occur over the next 18 months, some jobs may be reclassified to a new series.